

Serial No. 09/666,684
Atty. Doc. No. 00P7901US

REMARKS

Claims 7-8, 14-15, 19-20, and 22-23 are pending in the application. Claims 1-6, 9-13, 16-18, and 21 have been cancelled. In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 7-8, 14-15, 19-20, and 22-23.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7-8, 14-15, 19-20, and 22-23 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicants have amended claims 7, 19, 14, and 22 to be in independent form to include the limitations of the claims from which they depend. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 7, 8, 14, 15, 19-20, and 22-23 are now in condition for allowance.

Rejection of Claims 3 and 11 Under § 112, ¶2

Claims 3 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶2, on the basis that the phrase "conformable material" is vague and indefinite. Claims 3 and 11 have been cancelled. However, claims 14 and 15 include the phrase "conformable material." For the following reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the phrase "conformable material" is not vague and indefinite.

Definiteness must be analyzed (1) in light of the claim interpretation that would be given by one of ordinary skill in the art and (2) in light of the content of the specification corresponding to the claim. *See* MPEP §2173.02.

With regard to (1), Applicants submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would understand the meaning of the phrase "conformable material." "Conformable material" and "conformable layer" are common phrases in the field of generator engineering. One of ordinary skill in the art would understand them to signify a material or layer that is capable of changing or conforming in shape, as opposed to a material or layer that is rigid and inflexible.

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With regard to (2), Applicants submit that the contents of Applicants' specification helps clarify the meaning of "conformable" by stating that "the conformable layer 41 readily conforms and shapes to the outer contours of the coil 43 to provide cushioning support when resting on or contacting the bottom 25." The specification also states that the "layer 41 of readily conformable material" is, for example, "formed of Dacron and resin in a sealed Mylar bag or container." Thus, in light of Applicants' specification, it would certainly be clear to one skilled in the art that a "conformable material" or a "conformable layer" is a material or layer that is capable of changing or conforming in shape.

For the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the phrase "conformable material" in claims 14 and 15 are not indefinite.

CONCLUSION

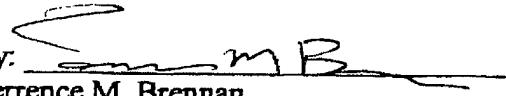
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 7-8, 14-15, 19-20, and 22-23. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this paper or application, or if any issues remain, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney to resolve such issue or question.

The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 5/9/02

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-6, 9-13, 16-18, and 21. Please amend claims 7, 14, 19, and 22 as follows:

7. (Amended) A stator for a power generator, the stator comprising:

a plurality of laminations having a plurality of spaced-apart stator coil slots formed therein;

stator coil slot contents positioned in each of the plurality of stator coil slots, said stator coil slot contents including at least one stator coil;

a coil support finger plate positioned at an end portion of the plurality of stator coil slots, the coil support finger plate having a base and a plurality of fingers extending outwardly from the base between the plurality of spaced-apart stator coil slots, the base including a stator slot contents support portion positioned to underlie end portions of the stator slot contents and to support the end portions of the stator coil slot contents thereon so that the stator slot contents support portion defines a stator slot bottom at the coil support finger plate;

wherein the plurality of fingers includes a plurality of spaced-apart pairs of fingers, wherein the stator coil slot bottom is positioned between each of the plurality of spaced-apart pairs of fingers, and wherein at least a pair of fingers of the plurality of fingers of the coil support finger plate each extend outwardly between an adjacent pair of end portions of the plurality of spaced-apart stator coil slots, the at least a pair of fingers including first and second fingers, distal end portions of the first finger extending outwardly a greater distance from the base than the second finger;

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wherein the first and second fingers are spaced-apart from each other and the greater-distance extending distal end portions of first finger being positioned adjacent distal side peripheries of each of the adjacent pair of end portions of stator coil slots and spaced-apart from distal end portions of the second finger, wherein medial portions of the first finger extends along only side peripheries of one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots, and wherein the second finger extends along only side peripheries of another one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots; and

[A stator as defined in Claim 6,] wherein the distal end portions of the first finger has a first wedge land formed in a region thereof adjacent the one of the end portions of the pair of stator slot coils, and wherein the spaced-apart region between the distal end portions of the second finger and the distal end portions of the first finger define a second wedge land for the another one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots so that the first wedge land for the end portion of the one stator slot is formed by a first pair of fingers having first and second fingers thereof and the second wedge land for the end portion of the one stator slot is formed by a second pair of fingers having first and second fingers thereof.

14. (Amended) A coil support finger plate for a stator of a power generator, the coil support finger plate comprising:

a base; and

a plurality of fingers extending outwardly from the base so that at least one of the plurality of fingers also extends between end portions of a pair of stator coil slots when positioned adjacent thereto;

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wherein the base includes a stator slot contents support portion positioned to underlie contents of an end portion of a stator coil slot and to radially support the stator coil slot contents thereon, the stator slot contents including at least one stator coil;

wherein the end portions of the stator slot contents abuttingly contact the stator slot contents support portion when positioned within a stator coil slot having the coil support finger plate so that the stator slot contents support portion defines a stator slot bottom at the coil support finger;

wherein the stator slot contents include a layer of readily conformable material underlying the at least one stator coil to enhance protection of the at least one stator coil from the outer surface of the stator slot bottom, and wherein the conformable material layer overlies and abuttingly contacts the stator slot bottom and underlies and abuttingly contacts end portions of the at least one stator coil so that the stator slot bottom supports both the conformable material layer and the at least one stator coil.

wherein the plurality of fingers includes a plurality of spaced-apart pairs of fingers, wherein the stator coil slot bottom is positioned between each of the plurality of spaced-apart pairs of fingers, and wherein at least a pair of fingers of the plurality of fingers of the coil support finger plate each extend outwardly between an adjacent pair of end portions of a plurality of spaced-apart stator coil slots of a stator, the at least a pair of fingers including first and second fingers, distal end portions of the first finger extending outwardly a greater distance from the base than the second finger;

wherein the first and second fingers are spaced-apart from each other and the greater-distance extending distal end portions of first finger being positioned adjacent distal side peripheries of each of the adjacent pair of end portions of stator coil slots and spaced-apart from

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distal end portions of the second finger, wherein medial portions of the first finger extends along only side peripheries of one of the pair of stator coil slots, and wherein the second finger extends along only side peripheries of another one of the pair of stator coil slots; and

[A coil support finger plate as defined in Claim 13,] wherein the distal end portions of the first finger has a first wedge land formed in a region thereof adjacent the one of the end portions of the pair of stator slot coils, and wherein the spaced-apart region between the distal end portions of the second finger and the distal end portions of the first finger define a second wedge land for the another one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots so that the first wedge land for the one stator slot is formed by a first pair of fingers having first and second fingers thereof and the second wedge land for the one stator slot is formed by a second pair of finger having first and second fingers thereof.

19. (Amended) A coil support finger plate for a stator of a power generator, the coil support finger plate comprising:

a base; and

a plurality of fingers extending outwardly from the base so that at least one of the plurality of fingers also extends between end portions of a pair of stator coil slots when positioned adjacent thereto, the at least one of the plurality of fingers having a distal end portion thereof being positioned adjacent distal side peripheries of each of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots and medial portions of the at least one of the plurality of fingers extending along only side peripheries of one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots;

wherein the plurality of fingers includes a plurality of spaced-apart pairs of fingers, wherein the at least one finger comprises at least a pair of fingers, and wherein the at least a pair

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of fingers of the plurality of fingers of the coil support finger plate each extend outwardly between an adjacent pair of end portions of a plurality of spaced-apart stator coil slots of a stator, the at least a pair of fingers including first and second fingers, distal end portions of the first finger extending outwardly a greater distance from the base than the second finger.

wherein the first and second fingers are spaced-apart from each other and the greater-distance extending distal end portions of first finger being positioned adjacent distal side peripheries of each of the adjacent pair of the end portions of stator coil slots and spaced-apart from distal end portions of the second finger, wherein medial portions of the first finger extends along only side peripheries of one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots, and wherein the second finger extends along only side peripheries of another one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots; and

[A coil support finger plate as defined in Claim 18,] wherein the distal end portions of the first finger has a first wedge land formed in a region thereof adjacent the one of the pair of stator coils, and wherein the spaced-apart region between the distal end portions of the second finger and the distal end portions of the first finger define a second wedge land for the another one of the end portions of the pair of stator coil slots so that the first wedge land for the one stator slot is formed by a first pair of fingers having first and second fingers thereof and the second wedge land for the one stator slot is formed by a second pair of fingers having first and second fingers thereof.

20. A coil support finger plate as defined in Claim 19, wherein the second wedge land includes an extended wedge capture region positioned to capture extended regions of a wedge

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when positioned therein to thereby enhance the securing of the wedge within the first and second wedge lands.

22. (Amended) A method for supporting a stator coil to thereby reduce vibrations within a stator, the method comprising:

radially supporting the bottom of end portions of the contents of a stator coil slot by the use of a coil support finger plate having a base portion thereof which defines a stator coil slot bottom; and

[A method as defined in Claim 21,] further comprising positioning first and second stator slot wedges each to overlie a corresponding one of end portions of first and second stator coil slots and in first and second spaced-apart, wedge lands formed in the coil support finger plate, the first wedge land for the first wedge being formed in a distal end portion of at least one finger of the coil support finger plate extending between end portions of the first and second stator coil slots and the second wedge land for the second wedge being formed in the distal end portion of the same at least one finger of the coil support finger plate.